

Minutes of Buddies Meeting: 26 June 2016

Chairperson: Bronwyn Bell

Note taker: Diana Woolley

Apologies: None

Guest speaker

David Knobel, former Greens candidate for Fairfax 2013 and state election 2015. David was not speaking officially for the Greens but as a concerned person. David gave us a very good talk and welcomed questions about the Greens' asylum seeker policy "A Better Way".

General meeting

Welcome: to new members – more than 12!

Senate voting: Al Spierings gave some advice about the upcoming federal election. Also spoke about a program, 'Be-friend a child in detention'.

Immigration Support Group: Brenda Smith advised that 4 asylum seekers have had their assessment interviews and are awaiting a decision and 4 more are waiting for their invitation to apply for a protection visa.

Finance: Fergus FitzGerald spoke of direct support being providing to asylum seekers for their protection visa claims. The legal costs are quite substantial. The report for June will be linked to in the Bulletin.

Refugee Week: Fergus advised the proposed screening at Nambour did not proceed. Instead Buddies supported the film event 'Freedom Stories' organised by Bob Cullen of the Caloundra Catholic Church Social Justice Network. This was an excellent film and the event was well attended.

IGM: Fergus advised that 35 financial members attended. 3 new directors were elected: Fergus, Zanette Perinoni and Mitra Khakbaz (MDA representative). Margaret Norris was appointed new secretary. There was a link to the annual report in last week's Bulletin.

Lobby Group: Audrey Raymond spoke about suggestion of members sending out personalised emails to politicians before the federal election.

LEH: Kayla Szumer advised the next Learn English Holiday program is scheduled to start on 10th July. So far only 5 applications have been received, whereas there are lots of homestay hosts. Unable to hold the event during school holidays this time because of Ramadan.

Refugee Women's Picnic: Zanette provided information about this joint event with MDA on Saturday 9th July at The Spit. Up to 50 ladies, including some children will come from Brisbane. Members asked to donate items like shampoo, hand cream etc.

Refugee friends: Bronwyn spoke about the South African asylum seeker "Cleo Patra", who is disabled and moving from the Caloundra hospital to a home in Beerwah. She needs financial support for disability items.

Refugee Welcome Zone: Bob Cullen drew the meeting's attention to the petition to sign for Cr Tim Dwyer seeking his support for the RWZ proposal.

Noosa Welcomes Refugee Group: Rada Van der Werff advised that she and several other Buddies are meeting this newly formed group at 'The J' at Noosa on 27th June.

Next Meeting:

Sunday 24th July, **chairperson:** Patrick Buick, **note taker:** Angela Wilson